

SELECTED ARTICLES FROM GREAT WORKS OF IMAAM IBN AL-QAYYIM

www.islam.gq

Contents

Brief Biography Of Imaam Ibn Al-Qayyim.....	2
State Of Repentance	3
Traps Of Iblees	7
Ways Of Strengthening Patience	10
Great Virtue Of Lowering The Gaze.....	16
Points Of Benefit.....	20

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF IMAAM IBN AL-QAYYIM

He is Abû "Abdullâh, Shamsud-Dîn Muhammad ibn Abû Bakr better known as ibn al-Qayyim (or ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah). He was born in the year 691H in the city of Damascus. From

an early age he set about acquiring knowledge and studied under many prominent teachers, the most notable of whom was Shaykhul-Islâm ibn Taymiyyah. His students include the likes of ibn Kathîr, adh-Dhahabî, ibn Bajab, ibn "Abdul-Hâdî and others. He authored over ninety books and booklets - all of them being characterised by their touching address to the soul and the heart, as well as their accuracy, precision and depth of research. ibn al-Qayyim died on the night of Thursday 13th Rajab at the time of the "Ishâ adhân in the year 751H. Testaments about his comprehensive knowledge, firm adherence to the way of the Salaf; excellent manners, worship and zuhd have been given by Al-Hâfidh ibn Hajar in ad-Dururul-Kâminah (3/400), Al-Hâfidh ibn Rajab in Dhayl Tabaqâtul-Hanâbilah (2/447), ash-Shawkânî in al-Badrut-Tâli" (2/143-146) and also Al-Hâfidh ibn Kathîr who said about him in al-Bidâyah wan-Nihâyah (14/246): "He attained great proficiency in many branches of knowledge, particularly knowledge of Tafsîr, Hadîth and Usûl. When Shaykh Taqiyyud-Dîn ibn Taymiyyah returned from Egypt in the year 712H, he stayed with the Shaykh until he died, learning a great deal of knowledge from him; along with the knowledge which he had already occupied himself in obtaining. So he became a singular Scholar in many branches of knowledge. He also continued to seek knowledge greatly day and night and was constant in humbly calling upon his Lord. He recited well and had fine manners. He had a great deal of love and did not harbour any envy for anyone, nor harm anyone, nor seek to find fault with anyone, nor bear any malice towards anyone. I was one of those who most often kept company with him and I was one of the most beloved of people to him. I do not know anyone in the world, in this time, who is a greater worshipper than him. His Salâh (Prayer) used to be very lengthy, with prolonged rukû" (bowing) and sujûd (prostration).

His companions would often reproach him for this, yet he never retorted back, nor did he abandon this practice - may Allâh shower His Mercy upon him."

STATE OF REPENTANCE

From: Madaarij as-Saalikeen
(Al-Jumuah Magazine)

The state of repentance, tawbah, is at the beginning, the middle and the end of all states of submission to the will of Allah. The servant who seeks the pleasure of Allah never abandons tawbah. He remains in the state of tawbah until his death. Whatever his state of belief, the servant makes tawbah his constant companion. Thus, tawbah is at the beginning and at the end of his servitude to his Creator. His need for tawbah at the end, just as at the beginning, overrides, and supersedes all other needs. Allah says: "And turn to Allah altogether (make tawbah), O you who believe so that you may succeed," (24:31)

The verse above is contained within a Madinan Surah (revealed after the migration to Madinah), in which Allah addresses the people of emaan, who are the best of His creation. He calls upon them to make tawbah "turn in repentance" to Him after they had already believed, gone through hardships, trials of faith, executed patience, migrated and performed jihad. Allah then made success conditional on perfecting such tawbah, as the effect is often conditional on the cause. No one can hope for success, except: those who make tawbah. Allah says: "And those who do not make tawbah are indeed the dhaalimoon (wrongdoers)." (49:11)

Allah divides His servants into two categories only: the repentant and the wrongdoers. There is no third category. Allah calls those who do not make tawbah, "dhaalimoon" (wrongdoers and transgressors) and no one is more of a wrongdoer and a transgressor than a person who does not repent for his evil actions. This state is a result of a person's ignorance of his Lord and the rights due to Him, as well as, his own defects and the evil of his deeds. The Prophet, sallallahu alayeh wa sallam, is reported to have said: "O people, make tawbah to Allah. By Allah, I make tawbah to Him more than seventy times each day." (Bukhari)

His companions used to count for him in each congregation his saying one hundred times: "My Lord, forgive me and accept my repentance, for You are At-Tawwab (the One who accept repentance), Al-Ghafoor (The Oft Forgiving)." The Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, is also reported to have said: "No one will be rescued (on the Day of Judgment) by his deeds. They (his companions) asked even you Messenger of Allah?

He said, even me, unless Allah would grant me His mercy and Grace."

May Allah's blessings and peace be upon His Messenger, the most knowledgeable among His creation of Him, His Rights, His Greatness and what servitude He deserves. He is the most knowledgeable of servitude and its requirements and the most committed in servitude to Allah.

The Starter (Fatihah) of Tawbah

Tawbah is the return of the servant to Allah. It is also his turning away from the path of those with whom Allah is angry and those who are astray. This returning cannot be done except by Allah's guidance to the Straight Path. The servant will not attain guidance except through Allah's help and the servant's submithrough tawheed. Surat-ul-Fatihah explains this concept in the most complete and eloquent manner.

Whoever appreciates Surat-ul-Fatihah and gives it is right estimate, through knowledge, contemplation upon its facts and by living its directives, will realise that one cannot recite it, with the true recitation of a servant, unless one makes sincere tawbah. The perfect guidance to the Straight Path cannot be attained with the indifference to sins or the persistence on sins. Indifference to sins negates the knowledge of guidance. Persistent sinning negates the intention and the will of the servant. Thus, tawbah will not be valid except after one recognises the sins, admits to them and seeks to rid oneself of their evil consequences.

Seeking Refuge from Sin

The first aspect of tawbah, then, is to see how one was taken away from seeking the pleasure of Allah, by committing sins. Next, one has to recognize that Allah didn't safeguard him from sin. One should also ponder how happy one was while sinning and being persistent on the sin, while knowing with surety that Allah ever watches over whatever is done in the heavens or on the earth. If the servant had sought refuge in Allah, he would not have gone away from the guidance of obedience, "And whoever holds firmly to Allah, then he is indeed guided to a Right Path." (3:101)

If one's holding onto Allah is firm, one would never be forsaken by Allah, "And hold firmly to Allah, He is your Mawlaa (Protector) and what an excellent Mawlaa and what an excellent Naseer (Helper)." (22:78)

In other words, whenever we hold firm to Him, He will become our Protector and He will support us against our nafs (inclinations) and the Shaytan. These two enemies, the nafs and Satan, are the ones that do not leave the servant for even a moment. Their

enmity is more harmful to the servant than the enemies from without. Attaining victory over

such enemies is more difficult, and the servant's need for such a victory is far more important. The degree of help rendered to defeat these enemies is dependent upon the degree of our dependence and holding onto Allah. If we do not hold firmly to Allah, we will go away from Allah's protection. This is indeed the true loss. Allah could have aided us in staying away from sins, however, because we deserted Him, we were allowed to listen to any obey our nafs. If He wished to protect us, the sin would not have found a way to get to us.

When the servant becomes heedless of the consequences of sin, he finds pleasure when he satisfies unlawful desires. This pleasure in disobedience is evidence of his ignorance of the Greatness of the One of disobeys, and his ignorance of the evil consequences of sins and evil actions. His pleasure with sin has concealed all of this from his sight. In fact, his pleasure with sin is more harmful to him than perpetrating the sin itself. The believer can never have any pleasure from sin. He cannot have complete satisfaction with it. On the contrary, he would not even pursue it, except with grief in his heart. But the intoxication of the desires obscures one from feeling this remorse. When the heart becomes empty from such grief and one is happy with sin, then one should question his faith and weep for the death of his heart. If one were alive, he would be sad for the perpetration of any sin, big or small. The evil effects of sin, more times than not, go unnoticed in us and in our brothers and sisters in Islam. Diligences in constant self-evaluation is necessary in leading us away from sin and its destructive ends. One can do this by focusing on the following.

1. The fear of dying before making tawbah.
2. Remorse about the good that was missed because of the disobedience of Allah.
3. Working seriously on regaining what has been missed.

If one becomes completely heedless then one becomes persistent, which means constant disobedience with the intention to perform the sin again and again. This by itself is another sin that could be far greater than the first. Part of the punishment for sin is that it leads to a greater sin, then another, and so on until it completely and certainly destroys the person if he does not repent.

Persistence on sin is another sin. Not attempting to rectify the sin means persistence on it and satisfaction with it. This is the sign of ruin. Worse than all of that, is the commission of sin in public when we are sure that Allah watches and sees everything from above His Throne. If we believe that Allah watches us, yet we proceed to commit sins publicly, this is a great contradiction. But if we don't believe that He watches us, then we are completely out of the realm of Islam.

There are two considerations for a sinner: lack of embarrassment from Allah knowing that Allah's sight watches over all, and lack of fear to go out of the deen. Therefore, one of the conditions of the acceptance of tawbah is that a person should firmly believe that Allah was watching and that He will always watch over him. He sees everything during the perpetration of sins.

The reality of tawbah is to return to Allah is not sound or complete without the knowledge of the Lord's names and attributes and their manifestations within Himself and in the world. The repenting servant should know that he was running away from his Lord, captured in the grip of his enemy. He didn't fall into the claws of his enemy except as a result of his ignorance of his Lord and his daring to go against Him. He should know how and when he became ignorant, and how and when he was captured. He should believe that tawbah requires great determination and complete awareness to rescue himself from the enemy and be able to return and run back, to his Lord Ar-Rahman Ar-Rahim. He should realize that returning to his Lord is actually turning away from the road of destruction, where his enemy had taken him. He should know the number of steps taken away from his Lord and the efforts and obstacles that he must strongly work on to get back to the Straight Path.

TRAPS OF IBLEES

(from At-Tafseer Al-Qayyim of Shaikh ibn Al-Qayyim Al-Hijra magazine)

It is not possible to encompass one of Iblees' evils, let alone all of them. Since Iblees' evil is of six types, Iblees remains behind the son of Adam until he gets him to do one or more of these six evils.

The First Evil is the Evil of Kufr and Shirk and enmity to Allâh and His Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. If he gains this from the son of Adam, his moaning is eased, and he rests from his ordeal with this man. Further, this is the first thing Iblees wants from al-'Abd (the worshipper). If Iblees gains this, he makes this person part of his army, one of his soldiers, and he appoints him as a deputy or agent against other human beings. Then, this person becomes one of the deputies or callers of Iblees.

If he despairs of enticing him with the first evil, and if this person is one of those for whom it was written that he would be a Muslim in his mother's womb, Iblees tries the **Second Class of Evil. This is bid'ah (innovation).** Iblees loves Bid'ah more than debauchery and disobedience because the harm of Bid'ah is in the essence of the religion. Moreover, it is an unrepentable sin and is against the call of the messengers and is a call to a message different from the one conveyed by Ar-Rasool. Bid'ah is a gate to Kufr and Shirk. Therefore, if Iblees gains the performance of Bid'ah from a person and makes him one of the people of Bid'ah, he also becomes one of his agents and a caller of his.

If Iblees fails and is unable to trap Al-'Abd at this class, and if he is one of those who were granted by Allâh the gift of As-Sunnah and hatred of the people of Bid'ah and error, he proceeds to the **Third Class of Evil**, which is the class of **Major Sins** in their various forms.

Iblees is very covetous of letting a person fall into major sin, especially if he is a scholar who is followed. Iblees is covetous of that, so that he may repel people from him and spread his sins and disobedience amongst the people. He uses some people as his agents to spread this person's sins under the false pretence that this will help them to get closer to Allâh. But in fact this person is the deputy of Iblees without knowing it. For those who would like abomination to be spread amongst the believers there is a great torment in this life and in the Hereafter especially if they take charge of spreading about enormities, not out of advice, but by obeying Iblees and being his agent. All this is to repel people from the Scholar and from his benefit.

Furthermore, the sins of this person (scholar), even if they reach the sky, are less to Allâh than the sins of those who would like to spread his sins about. The scholar's sins are wrongdoing to himself. If he seeks forgiveness from Allâh and repents, Allâh will accept his repentance, and He will change his bad deeds to good deeds. However, the sin of those who spread about abominations are doing wrong to the believers by looking for their mistakes and by intending to expose them. Allâh is in close observation, and He knows about this ambushade. Nothing hidden in the chest or soul is hidden to Allâh.

If Iblees is unable to snare Al-'Abd (the slave) at this degree he moves him to the **Fourth Class**, or the **Minor Sins**. These sins may ruin a person if they accumulate. That is why Ar-Rasool sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said, Be aware of the minor sins, because the simile of the minor sin is like the people who went to a desert. Then he sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam mentioned a Hadeeth the meaning of which is that every one of them brought a stick of wood until they had kindled a huge fire (just as the minor sins add up little by little until they become a major sin). The person continues taking the matter of minor sins easily until he considers them inconsequential. Therefore, a person who commits major sins but fears their effect is in a better condition than he is.

If the Al-'Abd has prevented Iblees from trapping him at this level, he moves him to the fifth level. **The Fifth Level is to occupy him with Permissible Things that do not gain him reward or punishment.** However, the punishment of this level is caused by passing the reward missed by being occupied with these deeds. If Al-'Abd has kept Iblees from succeeding at this level, and if he is careful about his time, being covetous with it, knows the value of moments, and knows the value of what comes of comfort or torment, Iblees transfers him to the sixth level. **The Sixth Class is to occupy him with Deeds of Lesser Reward** to keep virtue away from him and to prevent him from attaining the reward of the favoured deed.

Therefore, he orders him to do a good action with less reward if that includes leaving a better action. Very few people are aware of this. Because if a person feels a strong urge to some kind of obedience, he does not doubt that it is true obedience and that he is getting closer to Allâh. He never thinks that this call is from Iblees because he believes that Iblees never calls one to do good. Therefore, he thinks that this call is from Allâh. Actually he is excused because he never knew that Iblees would call one to seventy doors of good deeds either to get him to one door of evil or to let a better deed than these seventy deeds pass away from him.

This cannot be known except by a light from Allâh, a light he instils in the heart of Al-'Abd. The source of this type of knowledge is following the way of Ar-Rasool sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam and taking care of the levels of deeds with Allâh, the deeds of His favoured ones, the deeds more pleasing to Him, and those more beneficial to Al-'Abd, and deeds that have more Naseehah (guidance) from Allâh, His Rasool, His Book, and His believing worshippers. No one has this type of knowledge except the inheritors of Ar-Rasool sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, his deputies in the Ummah, and his successors on earth. In addition, most of the creation is screened from this. This call does not come to their hearts. Allâh gives His favour to whomever He wills from among His worshippers.

If Al-'Abd prevents Iblees from trapping him at any of these six levels, and if it becomes difficult for Iblees, he empowers his party of jinn and human beings with different kinds of harm, **imputing disbelief to him, calling him misguided and an innovator, warning people against him,** and intending to weaken him and to disturb his heart. Iblees, by using this method, tries to confuse this person's thinking and tries to **prevent people from benefiting from him.** Therefore Iblees expends his utmost effort to empower the defenders of falsehood, from human beings and from jinn, against him. Then the believer is at war until death. Whenever he gives up, he is hurt or is taken captive. Hence the believer is in Jihad until he meets with Allâh.

WAYS OF STRENGTHENING PATIENCE

(From: Patience and Gratitude by ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah. An abridgement of his original work entitled, "Uddat as-Sâbireen wa Dhâkirat" by TaHa Publications)

The Patience of noble people and the patience of ignoble people

Every person has to exercise patience in order to face difficulties, whether he does so willingly or unwillingly. The noble person exercises patience willingly, because he realizes the benefits of patience, and he knows that he will be rewarded for his patience and will be criticized if he panics. He is aware that if he does not have patience, panicking and impatience will not help him to regain missed opportunities, and will not take away things he dislikes. Whatever is decreed and is qada" wa qadr cannot be prevented from happening, and whatever is decreed not to happen cannot be made to happen. So an attitude of impatience and panic actually causes harm.

A wise man said: "A man with wisdom as soon as adversity appears does that which a foolish man does after a month (i.e. he resorts to patience)."

The ignoble man exercises patience only when he realizes he has no choice. After wasting a lot of time and energy and panicking and struggling, he realizes that his impatience will not help him. Then he exercises patience in the same way that a person who has been tied up to be whipped exercises patience.

The noble person practices patience in obeying Allâh, whilst the ignoble person exercises patience in obeying the Shaytân. So ignoble people have the greatest patience in following their own whims and desires, and have the least patience in spending in the way of Shaytân and no patience when it comes to spending even a few pennies in the way of Allâh. They will endure many difficulties in order to follow their own whims and desires, but cannot bear even the least difficulties in order to please their Lord. They will endure slander for the sake of committing wrong actions, but cannot exercise patience in putting up with slander for the sake of Allâh. Such people will avoid enjoining the good and forbidding the evil for fear of what people will say about them for doing so, but they will expose their honour to slander and bear it most patiently for the sake of following their own whims and desires. Similarly, they are not prepared to practise patience in devoting themselves to Allâh, but when it comes to

devoting themselves to Shaytân and their own whims and desires, they will exercise remarkable patience. Such people will never be noble in the sight of Allâh, and on the Day of Resurrection they will not be raised with the people of nobility and decency.

Ways of strengthening patience

As patience is fard (obligatory), Allâh has provided us with ways and means of obtaining and strengthening the quality of patience, for He has never instructed us to do something without providing us with help and support to do it, and ways and means of achieving it. He has never created a disease without creating a cure for it, and He has guaranteed cure when medicine is used. Even so, patience is difficult, but it is not impossible to attain. Patience consists of two elements: knowledge and action, and from these two elements are derived the remedies for all spiritual and physical troubles. Knowledge and action, combined, are always essential.

Knowledge

The element of knowledge is necessary in order to realize the benefits of following the commands of Allâh and the sense of happiness and fulfillment that one may attain by following them; and to understand what it is in the forbidden things that causes harm, imperfection and evil. When a person realizes that, and adds strong willpower, the desire for spiritual achievement and the wish to live as a complete human being (as opposed to as animal-like existence), then it will become easy for him to attain the quality of patience. The bitterness of patience will become sweet and the pain of patience will become joy.

Action

As we have already seen, patience is a constant battle between the motives of reason and religion on the one hand, and the motive of whims and desires on the other. If a person wants reason and religion to overcome whims and desires, then he has to strengthen the former and weaken the latter, just like promoting good health and reducing the risk of illness.

For example, a person who has a strong desire to commit adultery can take steps to combat it. He may have such a strong sexual urge that he cannot stop committing adultery; or he may not commit the act itself, but is unable to stop looking at women; or he may be able to stop looking at women but he cannot stop thinking of sex, to the extent that all his thoughts are devoted to this subject, and he never gives any thought to things which could benefit him in this life and in the hereafter. If he is really serious about finding a cure for this disease, then he has to follow these steps:

1. He can find out what types of food increase sexual desire, then he can reduce his intake of them, or avoid them altogether. If this does not work, then he can fast, as fasting reduces sexual desire, especially if the food eaten when he breaks his fast is moderate.
2. He should lower his gaze and avoid looking at women, as looking at women may provoke sexual desire. The Prophet (SAAS) warned us, "Looking (at women) is one of the arrows of the Shaytân." Shaytân aims his arrows from reaching its target unless one lowers one's gaze. But if a person keeps looking, he is exposing his heart to these arrows, any one of which may be fatal.
3. He should enjoy permissible sex (i.e. within marriage), because any desire that Allâh created in us has a permissible outlet. This is the best cure, as the Prophet (SAAS) has indicated.
4. He should think of the harm and damage that may befall him in this world as a consequence of his fulfilling his sexual desire in a prohibited way. Even if there were no Paradise or Hell, the harm that could be caused in this world by such an action should be enough to stop him from doing it. The damage caused by such actions is so great that it can barely be quantified, but sexual desire makes some people blind.
5. He should think of the ugliness of the person who is tempting him to commit adultery with her, especially if she is known to have other partners. He should feel too proud to drink from the same place as dogs and wolves!

Strengthening the motive of reason and religion

In the battle between reason/religion and whims/desires, we have the following "weapons" at our disposal:

1. We should remember the glory and greatness of Allâh, and feel that He is too great to be sinned against as He is all-seeing and all-hearing. Whoever thinks of the greatness of Allâh will never be at ease in committing wrong actions.
2. If we claim to love Allâh, then we should not disobey Him, because of that love. A person should be obedient to the One he claims to love. Those who refrain from committing wrong action out of their love for Allâh are of the highest

status in His sight, as are those who worship Him out of love for Him. There is great difference between the one who obeys Allâh and abstains from wrong action out of love, and the one who does so out of fear of punishment.

3. We should think of the blessings and favours of Allâh, as a decent and noble person would never act against the one who has been treating him kindly. Only base and ignoble people do such a thing. If we think of the blessings and favours of Allâh, we will realize that we should not respond by doing against His commands and committing wrong action.

4. We should think of the wrath and punishment of Allâh, as He will be angry with the person who persists in committing wrong action. Nothing can stand in the way of the consequences of His anger, least of all this weak slave of His.

5. We should think of what the person who commits wrong action has to lose, in this world and the next. It should be sufficient to think of the loss of îman (faith), of which the smallest amount is worth much more than everything in this world. How can anyone be willing to lose his îman in return for some brief moment of pleasure the consequences of which might last forever? In a sahîh hadîth, the Prophet (SAAS) said:

“No adulterer is a believer at the time of when he is committing adultery.”

Commenting on this hadîth, one of the Sahâbah said:

“His îman will be dragged out of him until it goes over his head like a cloud. If he repents, then his îman will return to him.”

6. We should relish the idea of defeating the Shaytân and being victorious over him, because of overcoming him, and our whims and desires, is a thing of joy and carries a great reward. It is like taking medicine and being rewarded with restoration to good health.

7. We should bear in mind the reward and compensation which Allâh has promised to those who control their whims and desires, and abstain from that which is harâm.

8. We should think of the special companionship of Allâh, as He has told us:

“Allâh is with those who patiently persevere” (Baqarah 2:153) “For Allâh is with those who restrain themselves and those who do good” (an-Nahl 16:128) “For verily Allâh is with those who do right.” („Ankabût 29:69)

9. We should be ever mindful of death, which could come upon us at any time,

suddenly and without warning.

10. We should stop thinking of falsehood and bad ideas. Even if bad thoughts cross our minds, we should not let them stay, otherwise they may become hopes and wishes which we may act upon, and harm ourselves and others in the process.

11. We should gradually strengthen our religious motive in fighting whims and desires. Once we have tasted the joy of defeating those whims and desires, then our determination and willpower will grow stronger.

12. We should direct our thoughts towards contemplation of the signs of Allâh which He has encouraged us to think about, whether they are in the Qur'ân or in the universe around us. If such thoughts are constantly in our hearts and minds, this will help us to shun the whisperings of the Shaytân. There is no greater loser than the one who, instead of thinking of Allâh, His Book, His Prophet and his Sahâbah, dwells on Shaytân and the ideas of Shaytân.

13. We should remember how short is our stay on this earth. No-one would want to feel that all he has achieved in this life is the worst kind of deeds, except a person who has no spiritual ambition, whose heart is dead and who is careless. Such a person will ultimately regret his deeds when he realizes that, far from benefiting him, they will lead to punishment. Even the person who has many good deeds to his credit will feel that sense of regret when he realizes that he could have done even more.

14. We should know that Allâh has created us to live an eternal life with no death, a life of pride and ease with no humiliation, a life of security with no fear, a life of richness with no poverty, a life of joy with no pain, a life of perfection with no flaws. Allâh is testing us in this world with a life that will end with death, a life of pride which is accompanied by humiliation and degradation, a life that is tainted by fear, where joy and ease are mixed with sorrow and pain. So many people are mistakenly seeking an easy life of power and pleasure in this world, but most of them never manage to achieve it, and those who do, enjoy it only for a brief time before it vanishes. The Prophets called people to an eternal life of plenty, and whoever answers their call will have the best life in this world, better than the life of kings and their followers, for zuhd in this life is true richness. This is something which the Shaytân greatly envies the believers.

Merely knowing the facts that we have outlined above is not enough. We have to

strive and do our utmost to achieve our aim and attain perfection. The best way to do so is to put a stop to the habits that are controlling our lives, as these are the main obstacles which prevent us from succeeding. We should avoid places of fitnah and temptation, as the Prophet (SAAS) told us, "Whoever hears of the Dajjâl should keep away from him." The best way to protect ourselves from wrong is to keep away from anything that could lead to it. One of the favorite tricks of the Shaytân, which deceives everyone except those who are clever enough to see it, is to show a person some goodness in a wrong thing, and call him to go towards what is good; when the person gets close to it, he falls into the trap.

GREAT VIRTUE OF LOWERING THE GAZE

(Taken from 'al-Muntaqaa min Ighaathatul Lufhaan fee Masaayid ash-Shaytaan' [pp.'s 102-105] of ibn al-Qayyim, summarised by Alee Hasan)

Allaah, the Exalted said,

"Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their private parts; that will make for greater purity for them. Indeed Allaah is well acquainted with all that they do."[an-Nur (24):30]

So Allaah made purification and spiritual growth to be the outcome of lowering the gaze and guarding the private parts. It is for this reason that lowering ones gaze from (seeing) the prohibited things necessarily leads to three benefits that carry tremendous value and are of great significance.

The First: experiencing the delight and sweetness of faith.

This delight and sweetness is far greater and more desirable than which might have been attained from the object that one lowered his gaze from for the sake of Allaah. Indeed,

"whosoever leaves something for the sake of Allaah then Allaah, the Mighty and Magnificent, will replace it with something better than it."[1]

The soul is a temptress and loves to look at beautiful forms and the eye is the guide of the heart. The heart commissions its guide to go and look to see what is there and when the eye informs it of a beautiful image it shudders out of love and desire for it. Frequently such inter-relations tire and wear down both the heart and the eye as is said:

When you sent your eye as a guide For your heart one day, the object of sight
fatigued you For you saw one over whom you had no power Neither a portion or in
totality, instead you had to be patient.

Therefore when the sight is prevented from looking and investigating the heart finds relief from having to go through the arduous task of (vainly) seeking and desiring.

Whosoever lets his sight roam free will find that he is in a perpetual state of loss and anguish for sight gives birth to love (mahabbah) the starting point of which is the heart being devoted and dependent upon that which it beholds. This then intensifies to become fervent longing (sabaabah) whereby the heart becomes totally dependent and devoted to the (object of its desire). Then this further intensifies and becomes infatuation (gharaamah) which clings to the heart like the one seeking repayment of a debt clings firmly to the one who has to pay the debt. Then this intensifies and becomes passionate love (ishk) and this is a love that transgresses all bounds. Then this further intensifies and becomes crazed passion (shaghafa) and this a love that encompasses every tiny part of the heart. Then this intensifies and becomes worshipful love (tatayyuma). Tatayyum means worship and it is said: tayyama Allaah i.e. he worshipped Allaah.

Hence the heart begins to worship that which is not correct for it to worship and the reason behind all of this was an illegal glance. The heart is now bound in chains whereas before it used to be the master, it is now imprisoned whereas before it was free. It has been oppressed by the eye and it complains to it upon which the eye replies: I am your guide and messenger and it was you who sent me in the first place!

All that has been mentioned applies to the heart that has relinquished the love of Allaah and being sincere to Him for indeed the heart must have an object of love that it devotes itself to. Therefore when the heart does not love Allaah Alone and does not take Him as its God then it must worship something else.

Allaah said concerning Yusuf as-Siddeeq 'alayhis salaam,

"Thus (did We order) so that We might turn away from him all evil and indecent actions for he was one of Our sincere servants." [Yusuf (12): 24]

It was because the wife of al-Azeez was a polytheist that (the passionate love) entered her heart despite her being married. It was because Yusuf 'alayhis salaam was sincere to Allaah that he was saved from it despite his being a young man, unmarried and a servant.

The Second: the illumination of the heart, clear perception and penetrating insight.

Ibn Shujaa` al-Kirmaanee said, "whosoever builds his outward form upon following the Sunnah, his internal form upon perpetual contemplation and awareness of Allaah, he restrains his soul from following desires, he lowers his gaze from the forbidden

things and he always eats the lawful things then his perception and insight shall never be wrong."

Allaah mentioned the people of Lut and what they were afflicted with and then He went on to say,

"Indeed in this are signs for the Mutawassimeen." [al-Hijr (15): 75]

The Mutwassimeen are those who have clear perception and penetrating insight, those who are secure from looking at the unlawful and performing indecent acts.

Allaah said after mentioning the verse concerning lowering the gaze,

"Allaah is the Light of the heavens and the earth." [an-Nur (24): 35]

The reason behind this is that the reward is of the same type as the action. So whosoever lowers his gaze from the unlawful for the sake of Allaah, the Mighty and Magnificent, He will replace it with something better than it of the same type. So just as the servant restrained the light of his eye from falling upon the unlawful, Allaah blesses the light of his sight and heart thereby making him perceive what he would not have seen and understood had he not lowered his gaze.

This is a matter that the person can physically sense in himself for the heart is like a mirror and the base desires are like rust upon it. When the mirror is polished and cleaned of the rust then it will reflect the realities (haqaa`iq) as they actually are. However if it remains rusty then it will not reflect properly and therefore its knowledge and speech will arise from conjecture and doubt.

The Third: the heart becoming strong, firm and courageous.

Allaah will give it the might of aid for its strength just as He gave it the might of clear proofs for its light. Hence the heart shall combine both of these factors and as a result, Shaytaan shall flee from it. It is mentioned in the narration,

"whosoever opposes his base desires, the Shaytaan shall flee in terror from his shade." [2]

This is why the one who follows his base desires shall find in himself the ignominy of the soul, its being weak, feeble and contemptible. Indeed Allaah places nobility for the one who obeys Him and disgrace for the one who disobeys Him,

"So do not lose heart nor fall into despair; for you must gain mastery if you are true in faith."[Aali Imraan (3): 139]

"If any do seek for nobility and power then to Allaah belongs all nobility and power." [Faatir (35): 10]

Meaning that whosoever seeks after disobedience and sin then Allaah, the Might and Magnificent, will humiliate the one who disobeys Him.

Some of the salaf said, "the people seek nobility and power at the door of the Kings and they will not find it except through the obedience of Allaah."

This is because the one who obeys Allaah has taken Allaah as his friend and protector and Allaah will never humiliate the one who takes his Lord as friend and patron. In the Du`aa Qunut there occurs,

"the one who You take as a friend is not humiliated and the one who You take as an enemy is not ennobled." [3]

Footnotes:

[1] Reported by Ahmad [5/363], al-Marwazee in 'Zawaa'id az-Zuhd' [no. 412], an-Nasaa'ee in 'al-Kubraa' as mentioned in 'Tuhfah al-Ashraaf' [11/199] from one of the Companions that the Messenger of Allaah (SAW) said, "indeed you will not leave anything for the sake of Allaah except that Allaah will replace it with something better than it." The isnaad is saheeh.

[2] This is not established as a hadeeth of the Prophet (SAW)

[3] Reported by Abu Daawood [Eng. Trans. 1/374 no. 1420], an-Nasaa'ee [3/248], at-Tirmidhee [no. 464], ibn Maajah [no. 1178], ad-Daarimee [1/311], Ahmad [1/199], ibn Khuzaymah [2/151] from al-Hasan from Alee (RA). The hadeeth is saheeh. The isnaad has been criticised by many, however none of the criticisms hold. Refer to: 'Nasb ar-Raayah' [2/125] and 'Talkhees al-Habeer' [1/247]

POINTS OF BENEFIT

By the Imâm - the Shaykh of Islâm - Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah
Al-Ibaanah Magazine , Issue No.3 - Dhul-Qa'dah 1416H / April 1996

1. Six Etiquettes of Learning [1]

Ibn al-Qayyim - rahimahullâh - said:

“There are six stages to knowledge:-Firstly:

Asking questions in a good manner.

Secondly: Remaining quiet and listening attentively.

Thirdly: Understanding well.

Fourthly: Memorising.

Fifthly: Teaching.

Sixthly - and it is its fruit: Acting upon the knowledge and keeping to its limits.” [2]

2. Fruits of Humility

Ibn al-Qayyim - rahimahullâh - said: [3]

One of the Salaf (Pious Predecessors) said: “Indeed a servant commits a sin by which he enters Paradise; and another does a good deed by which he enters the Fire.” It was asked: How is that? So he replied: “The one who committed the sin, constantly thinks about it; which causes him to fear it, regret it, weep over it and feel ashamed in front of his Lord the Most High - due to it. He stands before Allâh, broken-hearted and with his head lowered in humility. So this sin is more beneficial to him than doing many acts of obedience, since it caused him to have humility and humbleness - which leads to the servant’s happiness and success - to the extent that this sin becomes the cause for him entering Paradise. As for the doer of good, then he does not consider this good a favour from his Lord upon him. Rather, he becomes arrogant and amazed with himself, saying: I have achieved such and such, and such and such. So this further increases him in self-adulation, pride and arrogance - such that this becomes the cause for his destruction.”

3. Purifying the Heart

Ibn al-Qayyim - rahimahullâh - said:

“There is no doubt that the heart becomes covered with rust, just as metal dishes - silver, and their like - become rusty. So the rust of the heart is polished with dhikr (remembrance of Allâh), for dhikr polishes the heart until it becomes like a shiny mirror. However, when dhikr is abandoned, the rust returns; and when it commences then the

heart again begins to be cleansed. Thus the heart becoming rusty is due to two matters: sins and ghaflah

(neglecting remembrance of Allâh). Likewise, it is cleansed and polished by two things: istigfâr (seeking Allâh's forgiveness) and dhikr." [4]

4. Jihâd Against the Self

"Jihâd (striving) against the soul has four stages:

Firstly: To strive in learning guidance and the religion of truth, without which there will be no success. Indeed, there can be no true happiness, nor any delight in this world and in the Hereafter, except through it.

Secondly: Striving to act upon what has been learnt, since knowledge without action will not benefit, rather it will cause harm.

Thirdly: Striving to invite others towards it and to teach those who do not know, otherwise he may be considered from those who hide what Allâh has revealed of guidance and clear explanation. Such knowledge will neither benefit, nor save a person from the punishment of Allâh.

Fourthly: Striving to be patient and persevering against those who oppose this da'wah (call) to Allâh and those who seek to cause harm - patiently bearing all these hardships for the sake of Allâh.

When these four stages are completed then such a person is considered to be amongst the Rabbâniyyûn. The

Salaf were agreed that a Scholar does not deserve the title of Rabbânî until he recognises and knows the truth, acts upon it, and teaches it to others. So whosoever has knowledge, acts upon it, and teaches this knowledge to others, is considered from the Rabbâniyyûn." [5]

5. Trials of the Heart

Ibn al-Qayyirn said, whilst commenting upon the following hadîth: "Trials and tribulations will be presented to hearts, as a reed mat is interwoven stick by stick. Any heart which absorbs these trials will have a black mark put in it. However, any heart that rejects them will have a white mark put in it. The result is that hearts will be of two kinds: one white like a white stone, which will not be harmed by trials as long as the heavens and earth endure; and the other dark and rusty, like an over-turned vessel; not able to

recognise the good, nor reject evil, but rather being absorbed with its desires.” [6]

“The fitan (trials) which are presented to the hearts - and which are the cause of its weakness - are: [i] the trials relating to shahwah (false desire) and [ii] the trials relating to shubhah (doubt) ... So the first causes intentions and desires to be corrupted, whilst the second causes knowledge and beliefs to be corrupted.” [7] Speaking about such trials, he - rahimahullâh - said: “Hearts - when exposed to such fitan (trials) - are of two types: [The first type]: a heart, which, when exposed to such trials, absorbs it like a sponge that soaks-up water, leaving in it a black stain. Such a heart continues to soak-up the various trials that are presented to it, until it becomes dark and corrupted - which is what is meant by “an over-turned vessel”, so when this occurs, two dangerous and deadly diseases take hold of it and plunge it into destruction

Firstly: confusing good with evil, so it neither recognises the good, nor rejects the evil. This disease may take hold of it to such an extent that it believes good to be evil; and evil to be good, Sunnah to be bid‘ah

(innovation); and innovations to be the Sunnah, and the truth to be falsehood; and falsehood the truth.

Secondly: judging by its whims and desires, over and against what Allâh’s Messenger sallallâhu ‘alayhi wa sallam came with - being enslaved by its whims and desires and being led by them also.

[The second type]: a white heart in which the light of îmân is bright and its radiance is illuminating. So when trials are presented to such a heart, it rejects and turns away from them. This further increases its light and illumination and its strength.” [8]

6. Four Principles of Worship

“(The Âyah): **“You alone do we worship.”** [Sûrah al-Fâtihah 1:5] is built upon four principles:- Ascertaining what Allâh and His Messenger love and are pleased with, from [i] the sayings of the heart and [ii] of the tongue; and [iii] the actions of the heart and [iv] of the limbs.

So al-‘ubûdiyyah (servitude and slavery to Allâh) is a comprehensive term for all these four stages. The one who actualises them has indeed actualised: **“You alone do we worship.”**

The saying of the heart: It is i'tiqâd (belief) in what Allâh - the Most Perfect - informed about His Self; concerning His Names, His Attributes, His Actions, His Angels, and all that He sent upon the tongue of His Messenger sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam.

The saying of the tongue: It is to inform and convey (what Allâh has revealed), to call to it, defend it, to explain the false innovations which oppose it, to establish its remembrance and to convey what it orders.

The action of the heart: Such as love for Him, reliance upon Him, repenting to Him, having fear and hope in Him, making the Dîn purely and sincerely for Him, having patience in what He orders and prohibits, having patience with what He decrees and being pleased with it, having allegiance and enmity for His sake, humbling oneself in front of Him and having humility in front of Him, becoming tranquil with Him and other than this from the actions of the heart which are actually connected to the action of the limbs ... and actions of the limbs without the action of the heart is of little benefit, if any benefit at all.

The action of the limbs: Such as Prayer and Jihâd, attending the Jumu'ah and being with the Jamâ'ah, aiding those who are unable and displaying goodness and kindness to the creation, and other than this." [9]

Footnotes:

1. The following are some points of benefit - extracted from the various works of the Shaykh - pertaining to purification of the souls and curing the diseases of the hearts.
2. Miftâh Dârus-Sa'âdah (p.283).
3. Al-Wâbilus-Sayib minal-Kalimit-Tayyib (p.15).
4. Al-Wâbilus-Sayyib (p.80).
5. Zâdul-Ma'âd fi Hadî Khayril-'Ibâd (pp.9-11).
6. Related by Muslim (no.144), from Hudhayfah radiallâhu 'anhu.
7. Ighâthatul-Luhfân (p.40).
8. Ighâthatul-Luhfân (pp. 39-40).
9. Madârijus-Sâlikîn (1/100-101).